

image  
245  
DIGITAL  
EDITION

# SPAWN®



McFARLANE



## PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

Clown gives Spawn the information to Sara's whereabouts, but isn't rewarded for his efforts. Later on, Jim risks everything to bring Sara home safely.



**Jim Downing (Spawn)** – A man whose past is shrouded in mystery, and connected intimately to the very fabric of the Spawn mythos, Jim is the world's newest Hellspawn...and so much more. Having spent years in a deep coma, Jim's main drive is piecing together the fragments of the man he was, in an effort to discover the man he truly is.



**Sara Johnston** – When Jim woke from his coma (issue #185), Sara was the first person to greet him on the other side of the darkness. A woman of strong faith, Sara's connection to Jim will test her in ways she could never imagine.



**Clown** – A demon with close ties to the legacy of the Hellspawn, Clown's goal of controlling Jim Downing has continuously been jeopardized. But, ever the survivor, Clown seeks new avenues through which to manipulate his prize – Downing will not slip through his grasp so easily.

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**image**

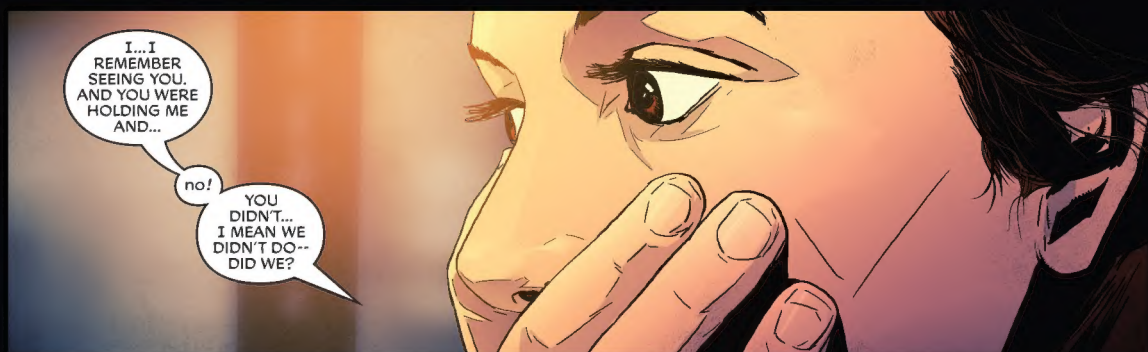
**TODD McFARLANE**  
PRODUCTIONS  
**SPAWN.COM**





...mmmnn











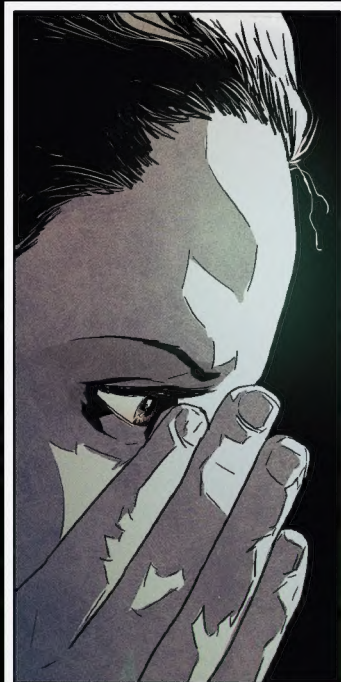


Oh,  
god  
no.

No.  
no. no.  
no!

C'mon,  
Sara. What've  
you done? This  
isn't like you.  
I need to  
think.

Take  
a deep  
breath.



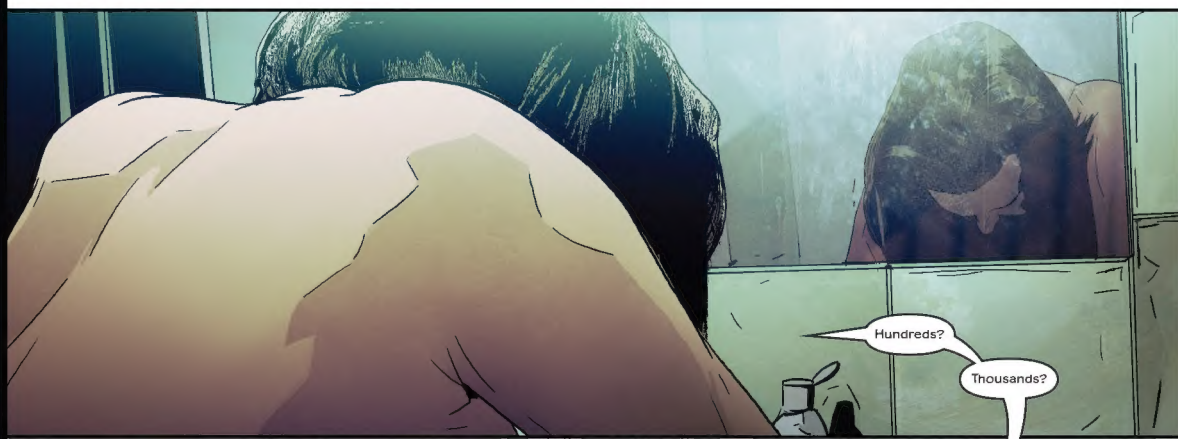
And  
think.

What does  
this mean? And  
why'd you act  
like such a moron  
out there?

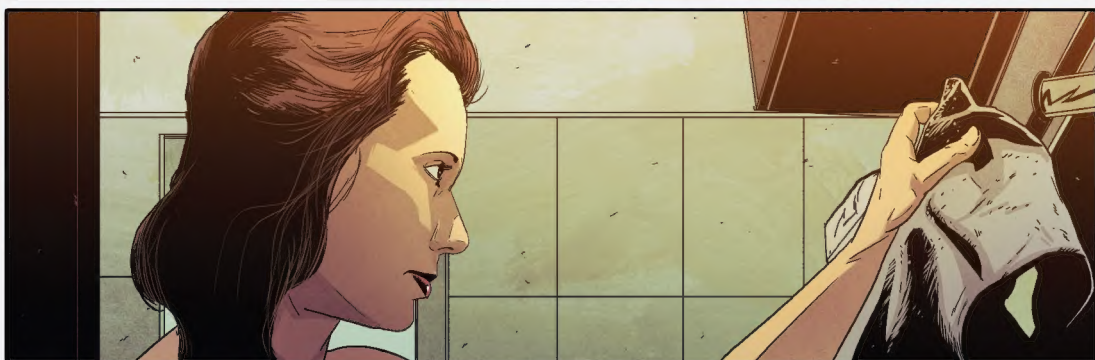


I like  
him, right?  
I mean how  
many times  
have I dreamt  
about this?

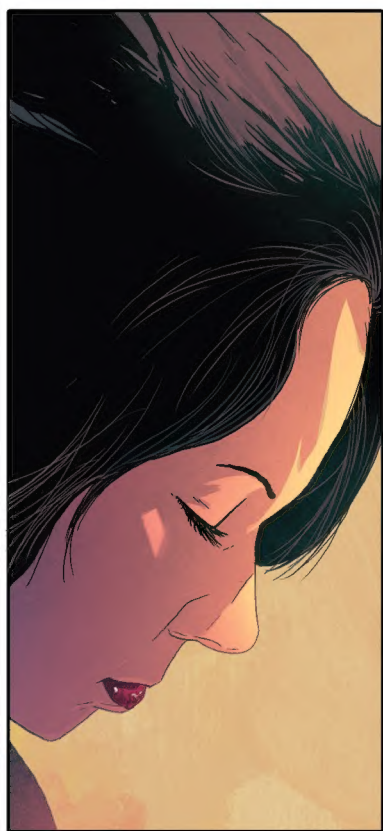




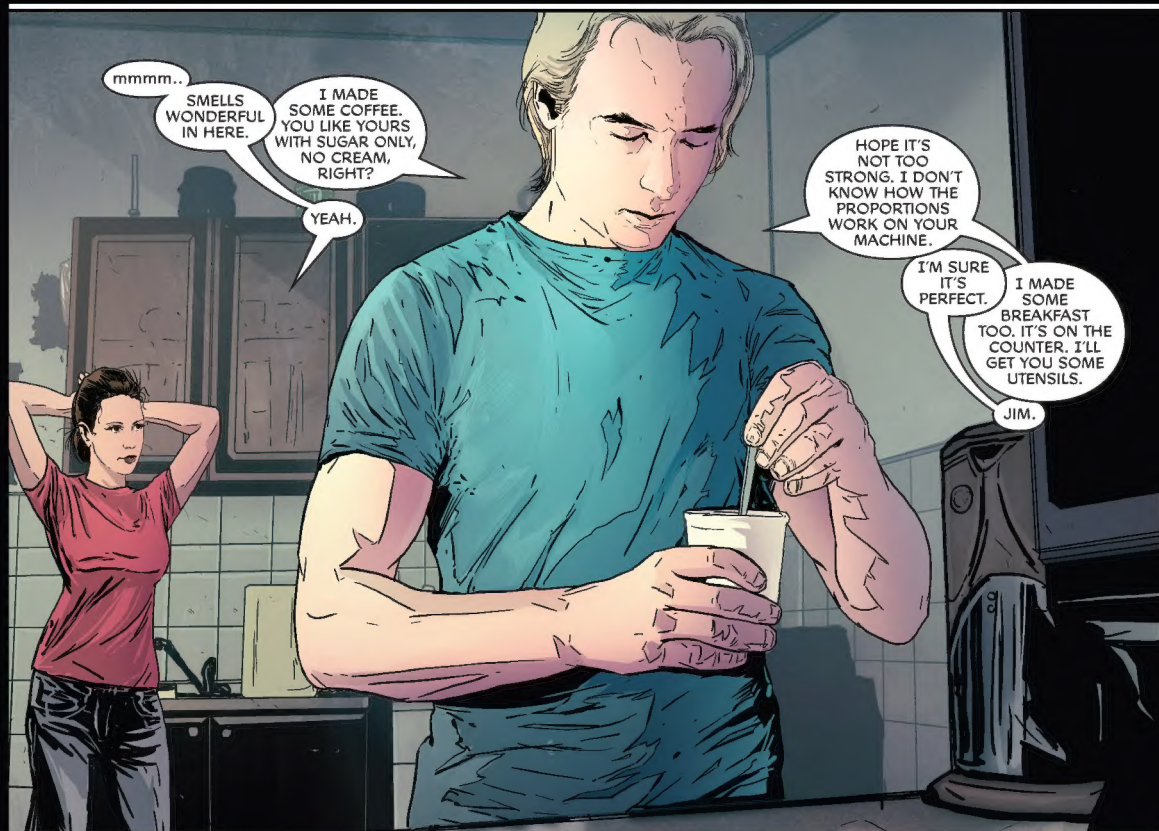












mmm...

SMELLS WONDERFUL IN HERE.

I MADE SOME COFFEE. YOU LIKE YOURS WITH SUGAR ONLY, NO CREAM, RIGHT?

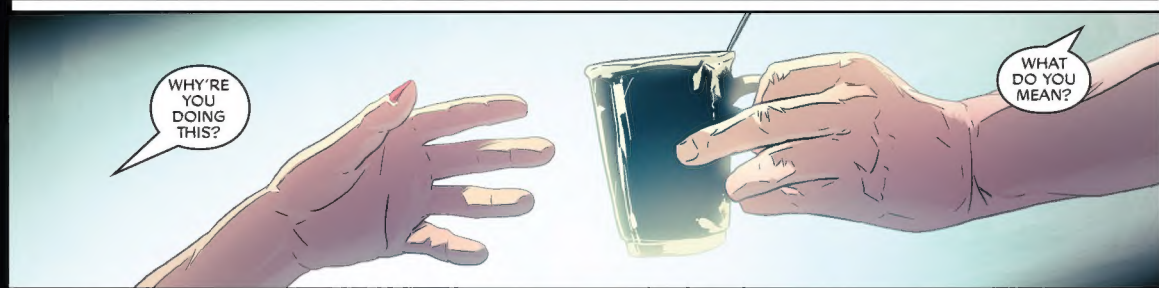
YEAH.

HOPE IT'S NOT TOO STRONG. I DON'T KNOW HOW THE PROPORTIONS WORK ON YOUR MACHINE.

I'M SURE IT'S PERFECT.

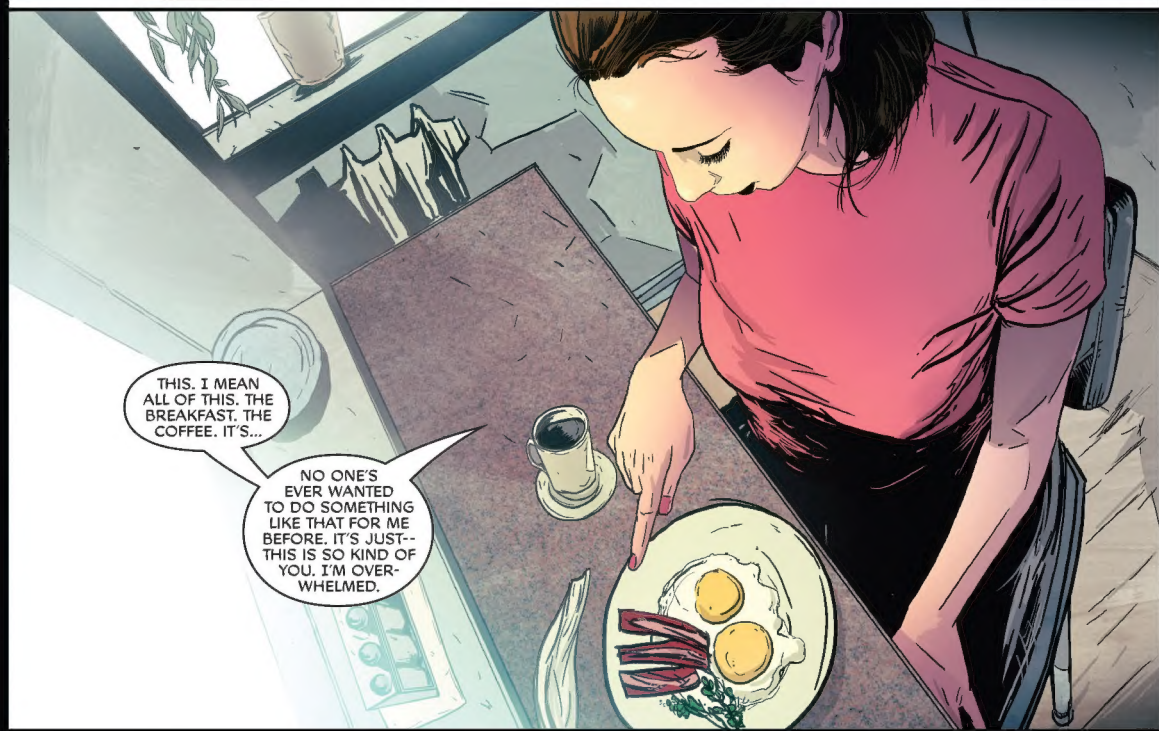
I MADE SOME BREAKFAST TOO. IT'S ON THE COUNTER. I'LL GET YOU SOME UTENSILS.

JIM.



WHY'RE YOU DOING THIS?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



THIS. I MEAN ALL OF THIS. THE BREAKFAST, THE COFFEE. IT'S...

NO ONE'S EVER WANTED TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT FOR ME BEFORE. IT'S JUST-- THIS IS SO KIND OF YOU. I'M OVERWHELMED.





FIRST OFF, IT'S MORNING. PEOPLE EAT BREAKFAST IN THE MORNING. MY BACON AND EGGS COMBO ISN'T TOO ORIGINAL.

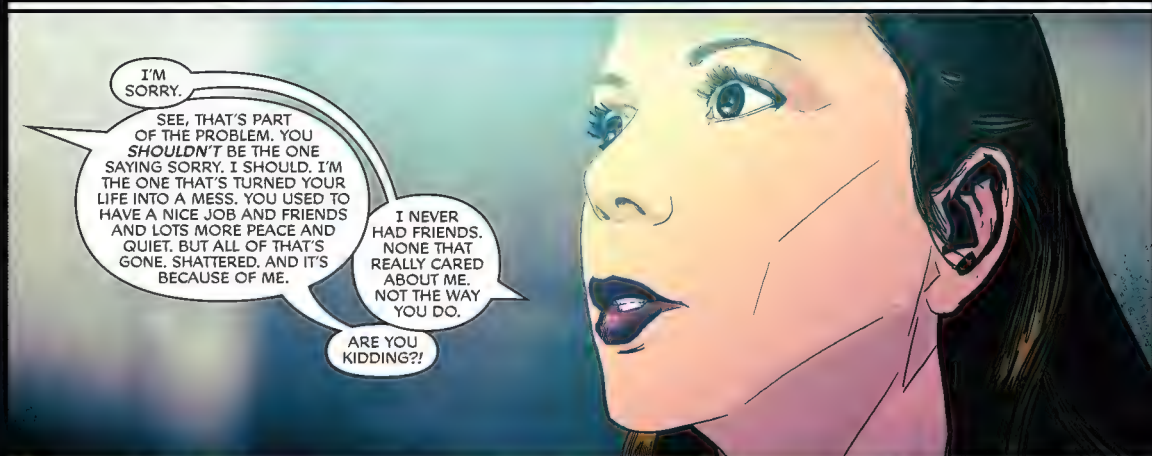
SECONDLY, YOU DESERVE IT.

AND THE REASON YOU DESERVE IT IS BECAUSE I'VE BEEN PUTTING YOU THROUGH PAIN, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY, SINCE I WOKE FROM MY COMA...

JIM, YOU'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG.

LET ME FINISH.

PLEASE.



I'M SORRY.

SEE, THAT'S PART OF THE PROBLEM. YOU *SHOULDN'T* BE THE ONE SAYING SORRY. I SHOULD. I'M THE ONE THAT'S TURNED YOUR LIFE INTO A MESS. YOU USED TO HAVE A NICE JOB AND FRIENDS AND LOTS MORE PEACE AND QUIET. BUT ALL OF THAT'S GONE. SHATTERED. AND IT'S BECAUSE OF ME.

I NEVER HAD FRIENDS. NONE THAT REALLY CARED ABOUT ME. NOT THE WAY YOU DO.

ARE YOU KIDDING?!

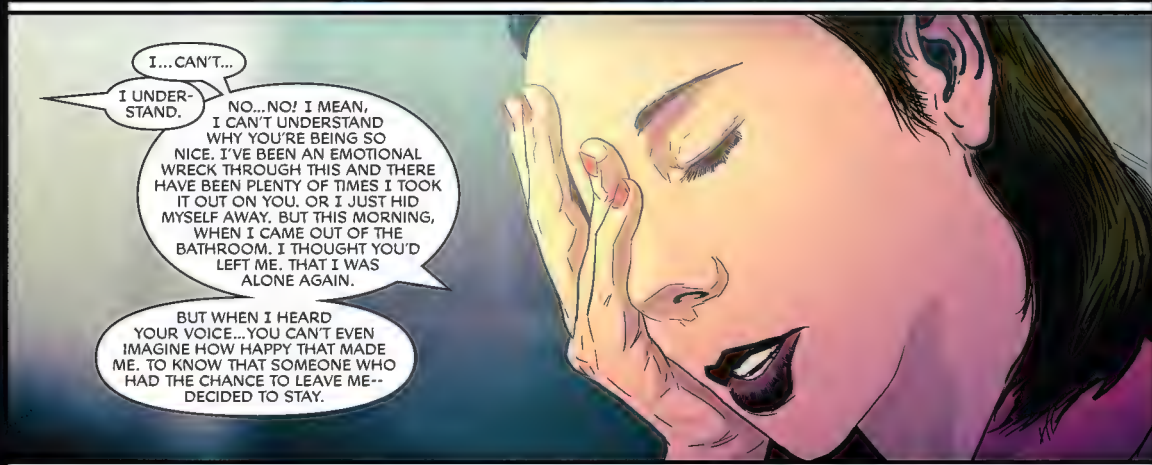


I'VE TREATED YOU LIKE CRAP MOST OF THE TIME. AND LIKE I SAID-- YOU DON'T DESERVE THAT.

SO I'M SORRY. I HOPE YOU'LL FORGIVE ME.

NOT THEN. NOT NOW. NOT EVER!

BUT IF YOU CAN, I'D LIKE TO MAKE YOU A PROMISE THAT I'LL NEVER PUT YOU IN A SITUATION YOU'RE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH EVER AGAIN. YOU'RE TOO GOOD A WOMAN, SARA. YOU DESERVE SO MUCH MORE THAN I'VE BEEN GIVING YOU.



I...CAN'T...

I UNDERSTAND.

NO...NO! I MEAN, I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'RE BEING SO NICE. I'VE BEEN AN EMOTIONAL WRECK THROUGH THIS AND THERE HAVE BEEN PLENTY OF TIMES I TOOK IT OUT ON YOU. OR I JUST HID MYSELF AWAY. BUT THIS MORNING, WHEN I CAME OUT OF THE BATHROOM, I THOUGHT YOU'D LEFT ME. THAT I WAS ALONE AGAIN.

BUT WHEN I HEARD YOUR VOICE...YOU CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE HOW HAPPY THAT MADE ME. TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE WHO HAD THE CHANCE TO LEAVE ME-- DECIDED TO STAY.









SO...YOU  
THINK HE'S HIDING  
HIS IDENTITY? HE  
KNOWS WHO HE IS?  
WHY WOULD HE  
DO THAT?

C'MON!  
YOU'VE READ  
MY BLOGS,  
DYLAN. IT'S ALL  
IN THERE.



OH MY  
GOD!

YOU THINK  
IT'S ALL IN  
THERE BUT SOME-  
THING'S MISSING.  
YOU REALLY BELIEVE  
DOWNING KNOWS  
WHO HE IS BUT HE'S  
FAKING IT...AND  
THE MEDIA?



WHY NOT? LOOK,  
I THINK HE LIKES THE  
LIMELIGHT, LIKE THE  
KARDASHIANS. ALWAYS  
WANTING TO BE AROUND  
THE CAMERAS.

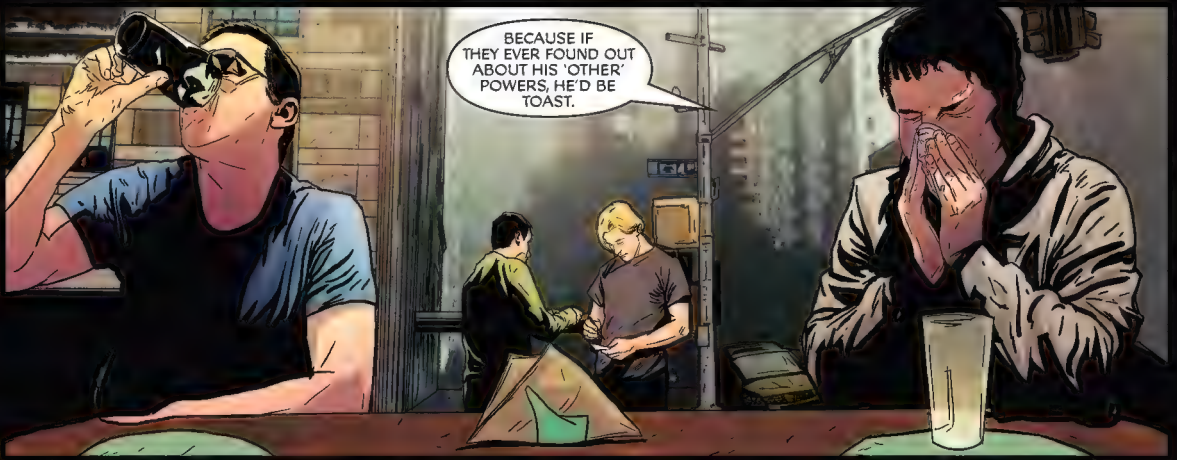
WHICH IS OKAY,  
BUT HE KNOWS HOW THE  
INTERNET WORKS--YOU HAVE  
TO HAVE A 'CATCHY' STORY OR  
YOU'RE NOTHING! WHY'S HE  
SO PROTECTIVE OF HIS  
PRIVATE LIFE?



BECAUSE  
HE DOESN'T  
LIKE  
CAMERAS IN  
HIS FACE  
24/7.

WRONG!  
THAT'S WHAT  
HE WANTS YOU  
TO THINK. HE ONLY  
WANTS US TO  
SEE THE GOOD  
STUFF.





BECAUSE IF THEY EVER FOUND OUT ABOUT HIS 'OTHER' POWERS, HE'D BE TOAST.



SO, HIS POWERS ARE REAL THEN? THOSE MIRACLES OF HIS-- THOSE ARE THE REAL DEAL?

OF COURSE.

WHAT I KEEP SAYING-- BUT NONE OF YOU WANT TO LISTEN--IS HE'S GOT MORE POWERS THAN HE'S LETTING ON! I WROTE ABOUT IT LAST NIGHT. HERE!--...WANT TO READ IT?



BEN, I'VE READ ALL YOUR SHIT! I GET THAT YOU THINK HE'S TIED TO THIS 'SPAWN' GUY SOMEHOW.

HE IS SPAWN!

WHATEVER! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE THAT THINKS THAT. YOUR CLUES AND THEORIES, THAT'S ALL YOU WRITE ABOUT. DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE A BIT OBSESSED WITH HIM?

NO.

BECAUSE I'M RIGHT.



YEAH? WELL, TOO BAD YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO MEET HIM.

I KNOW. BUT THAT'D BE SWEET!

I'D SAY "JIM, YOU NEED TO GET OUT MORE. SEE THE PEOPLE." THEN I'D ASK HIM ABOUT ALL HIS TRIPS TO HELL.

DUDE, YOU'RE CRAZY.





HOW'S YOUR DAY GOING TODAY?

OH, ME? GOOD! THANK YOU FOR ASKING. YOU DOING NICE TOO?

TRYING.

GOOD. IT'S IMPORTANT TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF, DON'T YOU THINK? LOOK AT ME, FIFTEEN YEARS I DRIVE THIS CAR. STILL I ENJOY.

THAT'S FANTASTIC.

HOW ABOUT YOU, SIR? YOU LIKE YOUR JOB?

I THINK SO--MOST OF THE TIME.

THEN YOU'RE BLESSED.



HEY, MISTER! I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE THAT MAN. FROM THE TELEVISION YOU WERE ON IT!



GUILTY AS CHARGED.

YOU NOW BECOME THE **SECOND** FAMOUS PERSON THAT RIDES MY CAB. I TOOK A PICTURE. WANT TO SEE?

SURE.



HE'S A SINGER OF RAP, MY SON TELLS ME. PRETTY YOUNG TOO FOR FAMOUS GUY.

BUT HE HAS A WEIRD NAME. MAYBE AFTER THOSE CANDIES--M AND M.

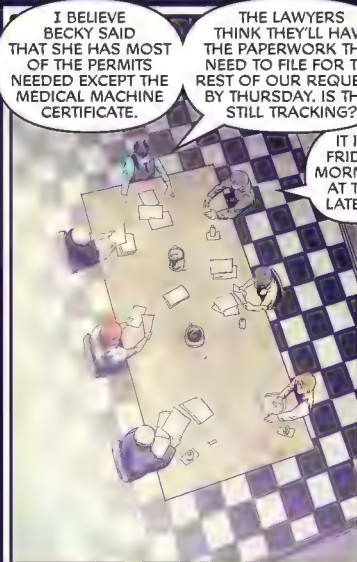




Moments Later.







I BELIEVE BECKY SAID THAT SHE HAS MOST OF THE PERMITS NEEDED EXCEPT THE MEDICAL MACHINE CERTIFICATE.

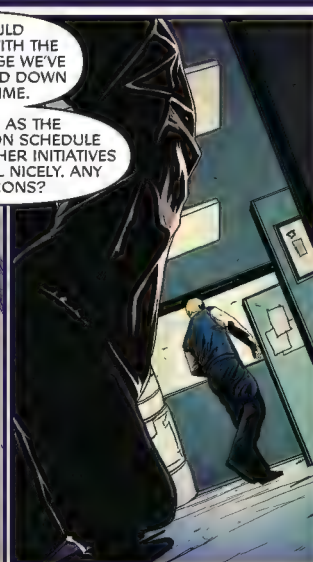
THE LAWYERS THINK THEY'LL HAVE THE PAPERWORK THEY NEED TO FILE FOR THE REST OF OUR REQUESTS BY THURSDAY. IS THAT STILL TRACKING?

IT IS. FRIDAY MORNING AT THE LATEST.

MARKETING HAS ALREADY BEGUN FINDING CO-SPONSORS FOR THE FOUNDATION'S INITIAL PUBLIC EVENT IN AUGUST.

THAT SHOULD TIE IN NICELY WITH THE MEDIA COVERAGE WE'VE ALREADY LOCKED DOWN FOR THAT TIME.

AS LONG AS THE CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE HOLDS OUR OTHER INITIATIVES WILL DOVETAIL NICELY. ANY QUESTIONS?



HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING.

MORNING, MR. DOWNING. WE WERE JUST WINDING DOWN.

MARC...? IS THAT TRUE?



YEP! ALRIGHT, GANG, GOOD STUFF TODAY. REMEMBER WE'VE GOT AN 'ALL HANDS ON DECK' MEETING NEXT TUESDAY AT TEN.

SIT DOWN, JIM. I'LL BE WITH YOU IN A MINUTE.



HEY, SORRY ABOUT MISSING THE MEETING. TRAFFIC WAS KIND OF CRAZY.

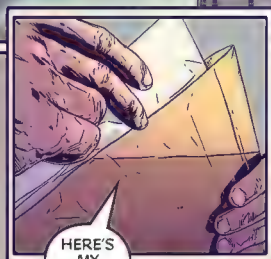
THAT'S OKAY. THAT'S NOT REALLY WHY I NEEDED YOU HERE. WE NEED TO TALK.

WHAT'S UP? YOU NEED ME FOR AN INTERVIEW OR SOMETHING?

I NEED YOU TO BE HONEST.

OKAY. WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND THIS TIME? AND IF IT'S ABOUT THE OTHER NIGHT... I ALREADY APOLOGIZED.





AND IT'S PRETTY STRAIGHT-FORWARD. WHERE DID YOU GET THIS PHOTO?\*





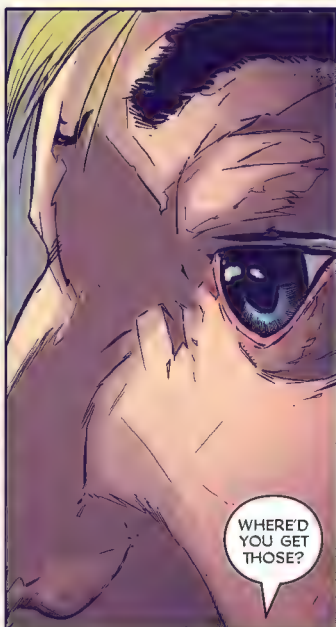


THERE ARE  
PEOPLE **DEAD**  
BECAUSE OF **THIS** PHOTO!!  
THAT'S A BIG F\*CKING DEAL  
TO ME! THEY'VE BEEN  
AFTER ME TOO!

AND  
THERE'S  
MORE.



HERE!  
TAKE A  
LOOK!



WHERE'D  
YOU GET  
THOSE?



YOU'RE  
NOT  
LISTENING?!

IT DOESN'T  
MATTER WHO, IT  
MATTERS WHY. WHY ARE SO  
MANY PEOPLE AFRAID OF YOUR  
PAST THEY'RE WILLING TO KILL TO  
KEEP IT QUIET? THEY KILLED MY  
FRIENDS, JIM... BECAUSE I ASKED  
THEM TO INVESTIGATE THAT WOMAN  
YOU'RE IN THE PICTURE WITH  
THEN THE C.I.A. -- OR SOME  
ORGANIZATION -- STARTED  
POKING AROUND.

STARTED TALKING  
ABOUT INSTALLATION  
ATTACKS AND ASSASSINA-  
TIONS AND THEN THEY  
HANDED ME THESE PICTURES.  
THEN JUST WALKED AWAY.  
NO EXPLANATION  
WHATSOEVER!

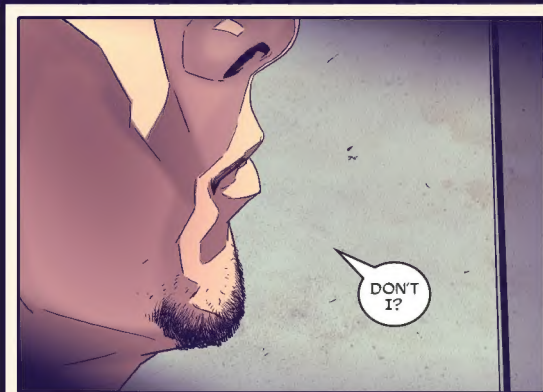
IT'S HARD  
ENOUGH DEALING WITH  
THE PEOPLE AT THIS JOB WHO  
THINK I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO  
RUN THIS FOUNDATION, OR HAVING  
TO EXPLAIN TO SUSAN EVERY DAY  
WHY I'M SO DAMN MOODY --  
WHICH JUST EATS AWAY AT  
HER TRUST FOR ME.



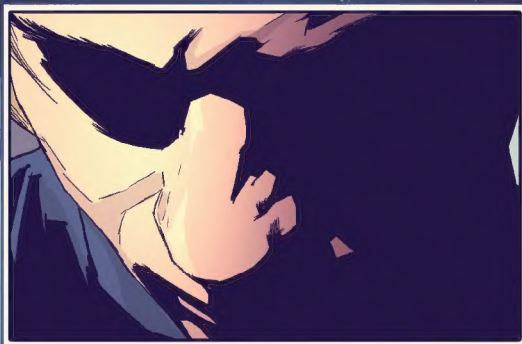


SO,  
I'LL CALM DOWN  
NOW AND  
SIMPLY ASK...

WHO IS  
SHE? AND WHAT'S  
YOUR CONNECTION  
TO ALL THIS. I AT  
LEAST DESERVE  
THAT.



DON'T  
I?



**SCREW IT!**

THAT'S IT! I'M DONE.  
I CAN'T DO THIS  
ANYMORE.

I QUIT!

MARC...  
DON'T GO.  
I NEED YOU  
TO LOOK  
AT ME.







yeah?

what's that?

ME.

TAKE A  
LOOK AT  
ME.

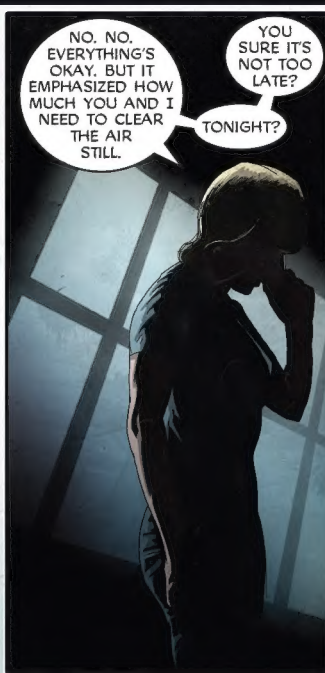
THIS  
MAY EXPLAIN  
MOST OF THE  
QUESTIONS  
YOU'RE  
ASKING.



Hours Later.



HEY, SARA.  
SORRY I DIDN'T  
CALL EARLIER. MY  
MEETING WITH MARC  
TOOK A LITTLE  
LONGER THAN I  
THOUGHT.



NO, NO.  
EVERYTHING'S  
OKAY. BUT IT  
EMPHASIZED HOW  
MUCH YOU AND I  
NEED TO CLEAR  
THE AIR  
STILL.

YOU  
SURE IT'S  
NOT TOO  
LATE?

TONIGHT?



GREAT.  
I'LL SEE YOU  
THEN.



SARA?

YOU  
HOME?

I'M  
RIGHT  
HERE.







Tyrant  
Lizard  
King

EMPIRE